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15 January 1957

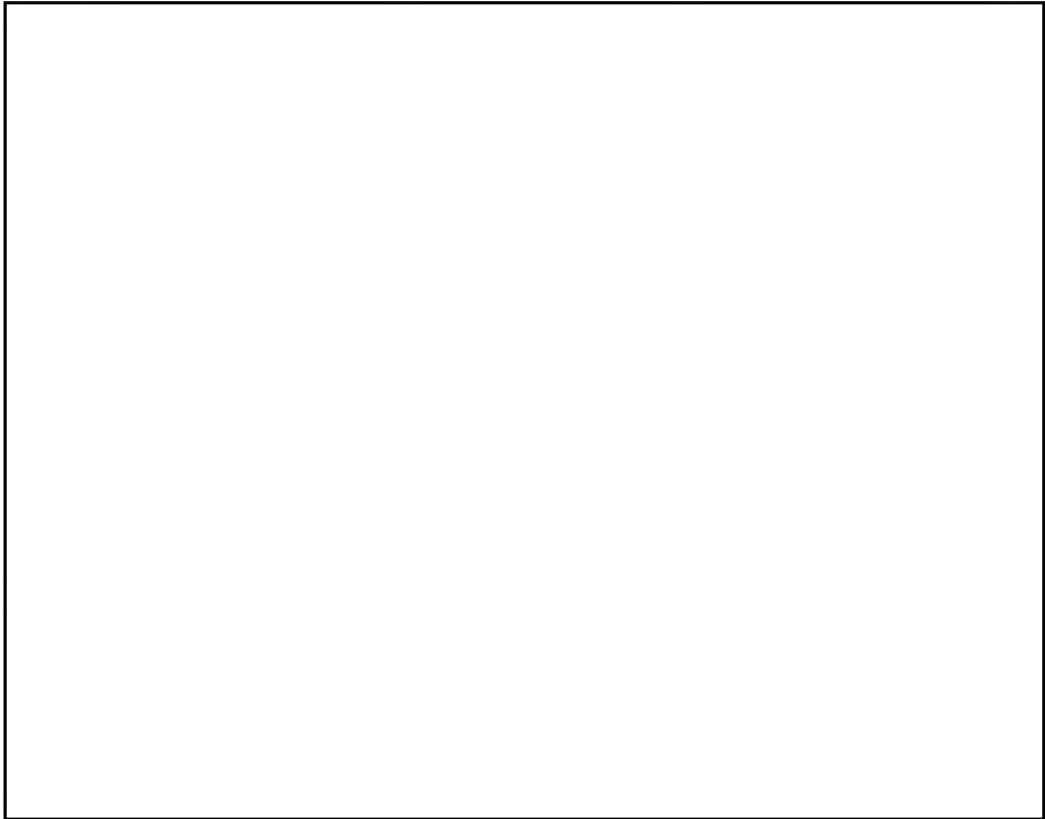


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2. SITUATION IN ALGERIA

Tension in Algeria has reached the stage where rash acts by either Moslems or Europeans designed to gain an advantage just before or during the forthcoming UN

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debate on Algeria may precipitate widespread massacres.

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in this eventuality the attitude of the French military--particularly its willingness to restrain settlers bent on reprisals--would be in doubt.

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Comment

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Riots may result if the French general in charge of security in the Algiers area carries out his threat of 13 January to force the opening of any Moslem shops which obey the rebels' order for an eight-day general strike coincident with the UN debate late this month.

French premier Mollet conceded on 8 January that an "explosion" in Algeria was possible at any moment and could lead to 40,000 or 50,000 casualties in Algiers alone within 24 to 48 hours, with comparable results in other large cities. In such an event, simultaneous massacres of French residents in Morocco and Tunisia would also be likely.

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CID 4. SYRIANS TO HOLD "UNION" DISCUSSIONS WITH EGYPT

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A Syrian committee headed by Minister of State Khalid al-Azm was scheduled to depart for Cairo on 14-15 January to discuss Syrian "union" with Egypt, according to the American embassy in Damascus.

Azm told Ambassador Moose "federation" would be a more accurate description than "union," as Syria would retain its sovereign entity. Azm thought unification of "currency and commerce" was remote, but closer co-ordination with Egypt in military and foreign policy was desired now. He thought a joint committee on foreign policy would be formed at cabinet minister level.

Comment Syrian-Egyptian talks on union were held shortly before the Suez dispute. Cairo, however, while publicly lauding Egyptian-Syrian union, privately takes a reserved view.

The simultaneous presence in Cairo of the Jordanian delegation seeking Arab financial assistance suggests that the Jordanian delegation may join the Egyptian-Syrian talks.

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6. INDIA REMAINS OPPOSED TO A KASHMIR PLEBISCITE

Both Krishna Menon in New York and Raghavan Pillai, secretary general of the Indian Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi, have bluntly informed American diplomats that India has no intention of giving up its portion of Kashmir. Both men were also cool toward the idea of another visit to the area by a UN representative seeking to arrange for a plebiscite. Menon indicated his government would reluctantly accept a Soviet veto if this was the only way to avoid UN Security Council action.

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Menon said he understood that Nehru and President Eisenhower had agreed the Kashmir situation should not be stirred up, and expressed his hope that the UN would take no action on the case.

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7. MISSILE-BASE TALKS WITH BRAZIL SEEN
FACING COLLAPSE

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President Kubitschek told Ambassador Briggs on 12 January that Brazil's present counteroffer on Washington's request for a missile-tracking base may be withdrawn and negotiations broken off unless agreement can be reached before the Brazilian congress reconvenes on 1 February. He said congressional pressure for a voice in the matter, backed by nationalist and Communist agitation, would probably make agreement impossible after that date.

Ambassador Briggs believes a breakdown could seriously prejudice Brazilian-American relations as well as Kubitschek's domestic position, but notes that Kubitschek may assume the United States is forced to accept his price.

On 11 January, Brazil amended the terms of its 17 December acceptance of the American request by adding a clause that would commit the United States to conclude separate agreements promising "accelerated" economic and military aid. It was hinted that Kubitschek might send President Eisenhower a note listing Washington's "overdue obligations" in these fields.

Kubitschek promised to take over the negotiations from the Foreign Ministry and await a formal comment from Washington.

Comment

Kubitschek once before, following President Eisenhower's personal note of 15 December, seemed determined to take charge of the negotiations. However, after pushing through cabinet approval, he turned the matter back to the Foreign Ministry and during subsequent delays resumed his previous equivocal position in the face of nationalist and Communist agitation and cabinet pressure for economic bargaining.

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